



Macarthur Girls High School

APPENDIX 3

MOBILE PHONE POLICY

Rationale

The school acknowledges and appreciates that mobile phones are part of everyday life. The school has a duty to ensure that all mobile phones are used responsibly by students and that students are aware of the etiquette of using electronic devices not only at school but in the wider society including the work place. Students are aware of the consequences of the misuse of mobile phones when breaching school policy and the law.

The school accepts that parents/caregivers give their children mobile phones to protect them from everyday risks involving personal security and safety. There is also increasing concern about children travelling alone on public transport or commuting long distances to school. It is acknowledged that providing a child with a mobile phone gives parents reassurance that they can speak with their child as quickly as possible.

Aims

To promote socially responsible behaviour and reinforce the school PRIDE values, with particular emphasis on developing RESPECT. This includes respect for individuals' rights to learn without disruption and distraction, to be safe and have their wellbeing protected, and not have their property interfered with.

Implementation

The use of mobile phones at Macarthur GHS should not automatically be of concern. It is only if a mobile phone is used inappropriately that action may be necessary. All student mobile phones will be on silent within the school grounds.

Acceptable Uses

Acceptable uses of mobile phones include but are not limited to:

- using it as a learning tool as directed by a teacher
- being used in classrooms with teacher permission, however, volume levels are to be adjusted so they do not impact negatively on other members of the school community if requested
- using it in external areas during recess and lunch for personal entertainment.

Unacceptable Uses

Inappropriate use of a mobile phone includes but is not limited to:

- using it for personal communication during class time
- using it in a way that disrupts or is likely to disrupt the learning environment or interfere with the operation of the school
- bullying, intimidating or otherwise harassing others through SMS or text messaging or through photographic, video or other data transfer systems available on the phone
- taking photographs or videos on departmental premises without permission from the principal, staff member, parent or student
- recording of conversations, including lessons, without the knowledge and permission of the teacher or those involved in the conversation
- using it for social media purposes that are deemed inappropriate or are unrelated to the

learning.

- downloading or otherwise accessing inappropriate material on the internet such as child abuse or pornographic or other offensive material
- using it to contact parent/caregivers regarding school issues without the consent of a teacher
- filming of fights or other criminal behaviour involving students that may occur at school, during school activities or while on the way to or from school
- using it in a way that threatens or is likely to threaten the safety or wellbeing of any person
- use that is in breach of any law.

Consequences

If students use mobile phones inappropriately, principals have the right to take action. Depending on the circumstances, action can include:

- banning students from using mobile phones during the course of the school day
- confiscating mobile phones from individual students
- applying student disciplinary provisions
- reporting the matter to the police.

If school staff have reasonable grounds to suspect that a student has inappropriate material on her phone, they should escort the student to the Principal who may confiscate the phone for the purpose of confirming the existence of the material. Please note that the Principal and Stage Leaders are the only persons allowed to view then confiscate a phone from a student. Any viewing of the material should be undertaken in the presence of the student and should be limited to establishing that inappropriate material is on the phone. Staff need to be sensitive to other personal information of the student that may also be present on the phone.

It is appropriate to confiscate phones from students when:

- it is necessary to examine the phone when there are reasonable grounds to suspect inappropriate material may be on the phone
- material that falls within the meaning of sexting is found on the phone
- the phone has been used to record fights or other criminal activity involving students occurring at a school, during school activities or on the way to, or from, the school.

If video recordings of fights or other criminal activity are located on a student's phone, the principal needs to consider whether the nature of the event recorded warrants reporting to the police in addition to any potential action under the Macarthur Girls High School Student Discipline in Government Schools Policy. Further advice on this issue may be sought from the Safety and Security Directorate on telephone 1300 363 778 or the Legal Services Directorate on 9561 8538.

Safety and Security of Mobile phones

The safety and security of mobile phones is the responsibility of the owner. The school accepts no responsibility if a device is lost, stolen, damaged or misplaced. This includes travelling to and from school and during PE/sport lessons.